



*Embassy of the United States of America  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

## **WARDEN MESSAGE**

*September 17, 2008*

**The Embassy requests that wardens pass the following message in its entirety to members of the American Community:**

In light of the September 17 terrorist attack against the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh encourages all Americans in Saudi Arabia to review the Travel Warning for Saudi Arabia that was published on July 9, 2008, the text of which follows below.

This Travel Warning updates information on the security situation in Saudi Arabia and reminds U.S. citizens of recommended security precautions. It supersedes the Travel Warning issued December 19, 2007.

The Department of State urges U.S. citizens to consider carefully the risks of traveling to Saudi Arabia. There is an ongoing security threat due to the continued presence of terrorist groups, some affiliated with al Qaida, who may target Western interests, housing compounds, and other facilities where Westerners congregate. These terrorist groups may also target Saudi Government facilities and economic/commercial targets within the Kingdom.

In February 2007, four French tourists were killed in a terrorist incident on a desert track north of Medina. A gunman fired shots at the U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah in May 2006. In February 2006, an attack was attempted on Saudi oil facilities in Abqaiq in the Eastern Province. An armed attack on the U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah on December 6, 2004, resulted in five deaths and eleven serious injuries among non-U.S. staff members.

Although terrorists have not conducted a successful attack against Westerners since February 2007, the United States Mission in Saudi Arabia remains an unaccompanied post as a result of continued security concerns. The Department of State has approved a family visitation program, in part because of the significant progress Saudi security forces have made in counteracting the terrorist threat within Saudi Arabia as they continue to arrest and break up terrorist cells.

From time to time, the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Saudi Arabia may restrict travel of official Americans or suspend public services for security reasons. In those instances, the Embassy and Consulates will keep the local American citizen community apprised through the Warden system and make every effort to provide emergency services to

U.S. citizens. Warden messages can be found on the U.S. Embassy Riyadh website: <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov>.

American citizens who choose to visit Saudi Arabia are strongly urged to avoid staying in hotels or housing compounds that do not apply stringent security measures and are also advised to maintain good situational awareness when visiting commercial establishments frequented by Westerners. American citizens also are advised to keep a low profile; vary times and routes of travel; exercise caution while driving, entering or exiting vehicles; and ensure that travel documents and visas are current and valid.

The Department of State advises that under Saudi law, married women need the permission of their husbands to leave Saudi Arabia and their children will require their father's permission to exit the country. This is true regardless of nationality. The U.S. Embassy has very limited ability to facilitate exit permission.

On February 20, 2008, a new regulation took effect. It requires Saudi men seeking the mandatory permission from their government to marry a foreign woman to sign a binding document granting irrevocable permission for their foreign-born spouse, and children born to them and that spouse, to travel freely and unhindered in and out of Saudi Arabia. However, this regulation is not retroactive. Under Saudi law, women married to Saudi males prior to the effective date of these new regulations still need the permission of their husbands to leave Saudi Arabia, and their children require the permission of their fathers to leave the country.

(End of Travel Warning)

For the latest security information, Americans traveling abroad should regularly monitor the State Department's Internet web site at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, including the Travel Warning for Saudi Arabia, and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada or, for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. Holidays).

American citizens are reminded to keep their registration up-to-date. See <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> for registration information.

To hear recordings of the most recent security information, you may call the Embassy in Riyadh at +966-1-488-3800 and press 6 for regional or worldwide security information or press 7 for "Travel Warning for Saudi Arabia". You can also review earlier Warden Messages at <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/service/advisories-for-americans-in-ksa/warden-messages.html>.

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